

## Environmentally Friendly Family Trips in NH

Before you know it the brisk cool days of fall will be upon us, and you'll find yourself fantasizing about the sunny summer days you spent on the shores of a lake, reading while your kids played in the water. But wait! Summer isn't over and there are still endless family-oriented summer learning activities to bring your kids away from the TV and outside to experience everything New Hampshire has to offer.

The following is a list of activities across the state that will not only get your family active but will also serve as an educational experience in the process.

**Mountains:** Contrary to popular belief the White Mountains are not the only place to hike in New Hampshire. Miller State Park in Peterborough is the oldest state park in New Hampshire and is home to Pack Monadnock Mountain (2, 290 feet). Pack Monadnock is a great place for a family hike. There are two trails that start from the Route 101 parking area. The Wapack Trail and the Marion Davis Trail are each only 1.4 miles to the summit. A winding 1.3-mile paved road also leads to the scenic summit and is open for visitors to drive in summer and on spring and fall weekends.

On clear days views reach to Mount Washington, the skyscrapers of Boston, and the Vermont hills. There is a DES Air Pollution Monitoring station on the summit. The Monitoring Station has an outdoor viewing screen where you can see real time air pollution and meteorological data. Also located on the summit are a fire tower and a hawk migration viewing area. Pack Monadnock is a great place to take a family hike, learn about air pollution, view hawk migration, and take in some great scenery. For more information on Miller State Park: <http://www.nhstateparks.org/explore/state-parks/miller-state-park.aspx>

The White Mountains also provide numerous hikes perfect for family outings. Programs like The Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) Family Adventure Camp is a three to five day hike geared towards kids ranging from ages five to 12 years old. Staff members provide outdoor based activities for the kids and family that are tailored specifically for each mountain location.

For more information: <http://www.outdoors.org/recreation/family/camps/index.cfm>

For small day hikes by region: <http://tripfinder.hike-nh.com/family.php>

**Bike:** New Hampshire's woods and towns are riddled with sometimes hidden bike paths which can serve as a great alternative to a two-hour family drive to the nearest amusement park. Bike rides are not only better for the environment but are also better for

your health. New Hampshire offers bike paths all around the state, through cities, around lakes and following railways. To find a bike path near you visit:

<http://www.traillink.com/stateactivity/nh-bike-trails.aspx> or for more all-encompassing information NH biking information: <http://www.nh.gov/dot/programs/bikeped/maps/>

**Ocean:** One of the nice things about living in New Hampshire is that a weekend beach trip is never too far away. You can spice up your next trip to the beach by visiting the Seacoast Science Center (SSC) in Rye. The SSC is a non-profit located in Odiorne Point State Park. Besides extensive beach-side trails the SSC offers a hands-on museum complete with touch-tank focused on ocean education. 70,000 visitors come to the SSC each year to experience their views, museum, camps and even their summer concert series, which is family-friendly and outdoors.

For more information: <http://www.seacoastsciencecenter.org/>

If being on the water is more up your alley The Gundalow Company of Portsmouth offers guided and educational tours on a historic gundalow purchased by the company in 1982. The Gundalow Company focuses on “protecting the Piscataqua Region’s maritime heritage and environment through education and action.” Many programs are offered by the company including a two hour sail on Saturday mornings where kids can ride free with a purchase of an adult ticket.

For more information: <http://www.gundalow.org/public-sails/public-sail-options/>

**Farms:** With a growing demand for local products New Hampshire is the perfect place to experience a variety of agricultural experiences. Agritourism has always been an important staple of New Hampshire whether it is visiting a farm or learning how to milk a cow. Try visiting a local agricultural fair, farmer’s market or eat at a restaurant that uses local food. VisitNH even offers Wine, Cheese and Chocolate trails where you can “live free and savor” the best tastes of the state has to offer. To find out more information about trails, fairs, restaurants and even local craftsmen visit:

<http://www.visitnh.gov/what-to-do/agritourism.aspx>

So live free and enjoy everything New Hampshire has to offer!

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